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28 November 1979

MEMORANDUM FOR: Deputy Director of Central Intelligence
FROM: Midcareer Course No. 69
SUBJECT: Key Issues Of Concern

In anticipation of our forthcoming meeting with you on Friday, 7 December 1979, the members of Midcareer Course No. 69 offer the following list of issues and questions as representative of some of our major concerns regarding the Agency and the Intelligence Community. Should you so desire, we would appreciate the opportunity to discuss some of them with you.

--Despite the verbal support often given by senior Agency and Community management to the concept of inter-agency cooperation within the Intelligence Community, many of us perceive that the operational reality continues to be an environment frequently characterized by rivalry and a disinclination to cooperate.

--There is a general class perception that although the Agency's mission continues to expand, there has been a simultaneous decline in the Agency's political influence within the Executive and Legislative branches of government, as well as within the Intelligence Community, which has had a debilitating impact on the budget, resources, and support needed to fulfill this mission.

--Over the past few years, the Agency has pursued more of an "open" policy concerning the release of information about the Agency and the results of its analysis to the public. How has this policy helped us? Has it hurt us?

--Given the expanding mission and responsibilities of the Agency and the counter trend toward more restrictive regulation and limited benefits for individual employees, should the DCI be more aggressive and expansive in applying his special authorities to aid in fulfilling our mission? For example, should we establish our own travel regulations independent of other Government agencies? Should sole source procurement be acceptable in certain situations?

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--What can be done to cope with the frequently observable lack of security consciousness among many Agency employees that has contributed to an atmosphere in which there have been several serious deliberate leaks and repeated inadvertent disclosures (telephone) of sensitive intelligence information?

--A strong impression which has emerged from several presentations in this course is that there is currently a plethora of committees and staffs which now report to the Director and which have been assigned major advisory and decisionmaking authority. Is there a danger that this dependence on so many committees and staffs may lead to a stagnation of the decision-making process and an evaporation of responsibility and accountability?

--We have spent substantial time discussing the "pros" and "cons" of having both specialists and generalists as Agency managers. Given what we perceive to be a trend toward the development of a generalist manager cadre within the Agency, many of us (mostly still specialists) question at what level of management one should cease to be a specialist? Are there senior Agency management positions that will continue to require a specialist?

--What are the most significant challenges that the Agency will face during the next few years?

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[Redacted]
Class Representative

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